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District Man Found Guilty of Armed Assault and Related Charges For Shooting at Family in Congress Park Neighborhood

WASHINGTON - A Superior Court jury has found a 17-year-old District of Columbia man, Michael Taylor, guilty of shooting at 5 members of a family in the District's Congress Park Neighborhood, hitting one victim and lodging a bullet in her back, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced today.

Taylor was found guilty today by a Superior Court jury of 12 criminal counts, including Assault with Significant Bodily Injury, 4 counts of Assault with a Dangerous Weapon, 4 counts of Possession of a Firearm During a Crime of Violence, Carrying a Pistol Without a License, Possession of an Unregistered Firearm, and Unlawful Possession of Ammunition. During the trial, Taylor also pled guilty to 3 counts of Assault with an Automobile, 3 counts of Felony Assault against a Police Officer While Armed, Fleeing, Reckless Driving, Possession of Marijuana, Carrying a Pistol Without a License, Possession of an Unregistered Firearm, and Unlawful Possession of Ammunition. The Honorable Ronna L. Beck presided over the trial. Sentencing has been set for August 27, 2010. Under the Superior Court Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines, the defendant faces a possible sentence of over 30 years in prison for these crimes.

The evidence at trial established that on April 7, 2009, Taylor became involved in a family argument that took place on Congress Street, SE, in the District's Congress Park neighborhood. During the argument, Taylor and two other individuals tried to assault another man, and when that attempt failed, Taylor followed the man and his girlfriend in a white car with tinted windows as they left the neighborhood for home. After Taylor's pursuit was thwarted by a passing police car, he returned to 13th and Congress Streets where the victims were walking home. Taylor pulled his car into an alley on 13th Street, exited the vehicle, and walked up the street shooting at the family, which included three girls, ages 5, 11, and 13. Taylor fired 7 times, hitting a 19-year-old woman in the back, where the bullet still remains lodged.

Five days later, on April 12, 2009, police attempted to make a traffic stop on the same white car with tinted windows, driven by Taylor with another male passenger. Taylor attempted to ram the police cruiser with his vehicle, nearly hitting the police car with officers inside. Taylor then led police on a high-speed chase throughout Southeast Washington, D.C., reaching speeds of up to 90 miles per hour, running stop signs and red lights, driving on the wrong side of the road, and nearly hitting multiple vehicles and pedestrians. During the course of the chase, Taylor attempted to ram two additional police vehicles with officers inside. As Taylor

approached Suitland Parkway near the Maryland state line, his left front tire blew out and Taylor eventually crashed the vehicle into a speed limit sign on the side of the road on Suitland Parkway. Taylor jumped out of the vehicle and threw a loaded .45-caliber semi-automatic pistol to the ground before he was apprehended by police. Additional .45-caliber ammunition was found inside the vehicle, and marijuana was found in Taylor's pocket. After police ran ballistics tests on the gun recovered from the scene, it was found to match the shell casings found at the scene of the shooting. Taylor's fingerprints were also recovered from the gun's magazine.

In announcing the guilty verdict, U.S. Attorney Machen expressed his appreciation to the Metropolitan Police Department, and particularly praised the work of D.C. Metropolitan Police Officers Dereck Phillip and James O'Bannon. U.S. Attorney Machen also commended the work of Paralegal Antoinette Sakamsa and Victim Advocate James Brennan of the U.S. Attorney's Office. Finally, he praised Assistant U.S. Attorneys Alex Little and Erin Andrews, who indicted the case, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Scott Sroka and Muiyiwa Bamiduro, who prosecuted it at trial.

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